



## My Next Steps:

# Relocation Considerations for Families Transitioning from the Military



## Question

**Our family is thinking about relocating after my service member transitions from the military. What factors should we consider, and what help is available as we make the best decision for our family?**



## Answer

Frequent relocation is a common aspect of military life. By now, you may have experienced multiple moves -- throughout a region, across the country, or around the world! Perhaps, this final relocation, as your service member leaves the military, will be your first move. One thing is certain; you have many choices to make and factors to consider as you plan for relocation after your service member transitions from the military. Some of these factors regarding your final military move may include the following:

**Location.** For the first time, your family will not be under orders to live in a specific area, so you get to choose where you're going to live! Would you like to live near your extended family? Are you interested in trying a new place or moving back to a climate or region that you enjoyed? Perhaps, you are happy to stay where you are. To assist with this decision, your service member may have the option to take up to 30 days of permissive temporary duty for house hunting or job search-related purposes. Know that the regulations and approval process vary by service branch and PTDY is not always granted.

**Employment Opportunities.** Many transitioning service members and their families move to locations based on finding or accepting jobs after the military. Keep in mind, making good employment decisions also means considering the cost of living in the area of employment, local and state taxes, housing costs and commute times. Before making a decision based solely on employment opportunities, be

sure to research these aspects of relocation, which can make a location more or less desirable. The Department of Labor's "My Next Move for Veterans" website can help you research employment as it relates to the different states. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website is another helpful resource for employment information. This site includes data about job opportunities and wages in different occupations for each state. Additionally, you may want to meet with a personal financial manager to help you understand how much income you will need to live comfortably in your desired location.

***"Military OneSource offers specialty consultations in the area of relocation and transition to assist you with your move. Call 800-342-9647 to schedule a one-on-one appointment."***

**Family Needs.** As you may know, the military may not authorize a permanent change of station move to a particular location if services in that area cannot meet the individual medical or developmental needs of your family members. Consider your family's special needs as you weigh your post-military location options during transition relocation. If you or other family members are enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program, seek the EFMP

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## Resources at a Glance

- Military OneSource [Relocation Specialty Consultations](#)
- [Move.mil](#)
- [My Next Move For Veterans](#)
- Move.mil - Transportation [Office Locator](#)



## Answer (cont.)

manager's assistance as you prepare to transition from the military. The EFMP office may also be able to help you identify and connect with resources in your new community.

**Veterans Benefits.** Military and veteran benefits vary by state and may have a significant impact on your family depending on your needs and goals. Some states may offer income tax or property tax reductions, educational benefits and reduced fees for various licenses or activities. Visit the state VA office website for the state you plan to relocate to after transition to find information about benefits that are available to veterans and their families.

**Regulations.** Established military guidelines determine many aspects of your final military move. As with an active duty PCS move, your service member's rank and the weight of your household goods determines what your family is authorized to have moved at the government's expense. Unlike an active duty PCS, the amount the government will pay for your final move may depend on the distance or location of your move and on your service member's years in service. Regulations also govern when you have to schedule a military-sponsored move, which is typically within 180 days or up to a year after your service member's separation or retirement date. If your family needs to

store your household goods, regulations will determine how long the military will pay for storage. The Department of Defense's official moving portal, Move.mil, provides information to help you understand how the government will assist with the move of your household goods during your final military move. Your local transportation office can help you understand how the regulations apply to your family's situation. The transportation office may also be able to help you determine if your family will be responsible for any out-of-pocket moving expenses.

As you weigh your relocation options and consider the factors listed, know that personalized support is available. Military OneSource offers specialty consultations in the area of relocation and transition to assist you with your move. Call 800-342-9647 to schedule a one-on-one appointment.

Take the time to thoughtfully consider the many factors that can help your family determine the best place to live after the transition from the military. Moving, as you may know, can be a stressful event. Minimize some of that stress by using the resources available to you to help you understand your options, make informed decisions and prepare for your final military move.



## Steps to Consider

*These "Steps to Consider" are not meant as a checklist. Use the suggestions to facilitate a discussion with your service member.*

- Discuss your family's wants, needs and goals for your life after transition from the military with your service member. A conversation may help guide your decisions about where to live after transition and highlight your relocation needs. Questions to discuss may include the following:
  - Is a specific location a priority?
  - Are you most concerned with employment opportunities after transition?
  - Are the needs of a family member impacting your relocation options?
- If employment opportunities are the driving factor in relocation, visit [My Next Move for Veterans](#) or the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) websites to gain an understanding of opportunities and wage information for jobs in your career field in the location you are considering.
- Consider other employment factors that may differ based on location. Understand the cost of living, commute time and distance, income taxes and taxes on military retirement pay (if applicable) in your desired post-military location to help you make relocation decisions that best fit your family's needs. A personal financial manager [on an installation](#) near you can help determine how different locations may impact your budget.
- If you or a family member is enrolled in EFMP, [contact](#) the EFMP office near you for assistance in determining if your desired location can provide necessary services to meet your family's medical and developmental needs.
- Research state benefits for veterans by visiting the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs [State Veterans Affairs Office Locator](#) website. Some state veterans' benefits may influence your decision about where to live after leaving the military. Some benefits to consider include the following:
  - Education benefits if you, your service member or other dependents are interested in enrolling in college or career-technical training.
  - State taxes on retirement income. This will impact the amount of money in your pocket.



## Steps to Consider (cont.)

- Proximity to VA hospitals, clinics and centers if your service member is eligible for VA health care and will use these facilities.
- Additional benefits. Some states offer property tax reductions for veterans and recreational benefits, such as free or reduced fees for hunting or fishing licenses.
- **Research how your final move may be different from previous moves.** To learn more, review the [Move.mil](#) website and [contact the local transportation office](#). Some factors to consider may include the following:
  - Your service member's years of military service. If your service member has less than 8 years of service, the government will only pay the cost of moving your belongings to your service member's Home of Record or his or her Place Entering Active Duty. Your family may be responsible for additional costs to move to a different location.
  - Is your service member retiring or separating from the military? If separating, your family has 180 days from your service member's active duty termination date to schedule a move. If retiring, your family has up to 1 year to schedule the move.
- Your service member's rank. Rank will determine the amount of weight the government will authorize and pay to move for your family.
- When you can move. If your service member plans to use transitional leave, be sure your moving plans fit within the allotted time frame for the move. Extensions to moving timelines may be authorized with appropriate approval from your service member's branch of service.
- Storage of household goods. Review the eligibility requirements and consider the length of time you will need to have your items stored. There are long-term and short-term storage options.
- **You service member may have the option to take up to 30 days of permissive temporary duty for house hunting or job search-related purposes.** The regulations for PTDY vary by service branch and may be impacted by the operational and manning needs in your service member's unit. Encourage your service member to ask his or her personnel section or command leadership about the possibility of PTDY authorization to prepare for transition.
- **Would you like personalized support with your relocation needs?** Military OneSource can help you create a moving plan. Call 800-342-9647 or visit the Military OneSource website to schedule an appointment with a [relocation specialty consultant](#).



## Resources

### Relocation Resources

- Move.mil: <https://www.move.mil/>
  - Retiree and Separatee Moves: <https://www.move.mil/moving-guide/retirees-separatees>
  - Entitlements: <https://www.move.mil/entitlements>
  - Transportation Office Locator: <https://www.move.mil/resources/locator-maps>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: <https://www.bls.gov/home.htm>
- State Department of Veterans Affairs Website Locator: <https://www.va.gov/statedva.htm>
- Military OneSource Relocation Specialty Consultations: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/-/spouse-relocation-and-transition>

### Other Resources

- My Next Move For Veterans: <https://www.mynextmove.org/vets/>

### Installation Resources

Locate a personal financial management program: <https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/>

- In the dropdown menu, choose "I'm looking for a program or service." Then, type in "Personal Financial Management Program" in the "I'm choosing from" text field. Next, you'll be asked to filter by installation or zip code. After making your selection, select the "Search" button.

Locate an Exceptional Family Member Program: <https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/>

- In the dropdown menu, choose "I'm looking for a program or service." Then, type in "EFMP- Family Support" in the "I'm choosing from" text field. Next, you'll be asked to filter by installation or zip code. After making your selection, select the "Search" button.



## Notes

## Related MySTeP Topics

- Personal Financial Counseling to Prepare for Transition from the Military
- Preparing for Financial Success after Transition from the Military

- Preparing your Child for your Family's Transition from the Military

- Managing Stress and Seeking Non-Medical Counseling Before, During and after Transition from the Military